

One goal lead on Dagenham in first leg—but is it enough?

WYCOMBE Wanderers now have to wait for a date still to be arranged next season to see whether their one-goal advantage will be enough to carry them through in the second leg of the Mithras Cup third round tie with Dagenham.

Team boss, Brian Lee is doubtful, although hardly worried, about the chances of progression. With Wycombe's withdrawal from the 1969-70 Cup he has his mind set more on the Premier Floodlight League.

Yet, whatever the possibility of sleepless nights before the return meeting at Dagenham, Wanderers should have had the issue sown up in the first leg at Loakes Park on Friday night.

In a strange 90 minutes, all three goals were planted against the run of play. Two up, a trifle luckily, by half time, the Blues rode their fortune to command the second period, only for the Athenians to cut back into the deficit fourteen minutes from time.

A thin crowd watched as Wanderers, without Maskell, Worley, Samuels, and Gale, rushed ahead after just six minutes. Tony Horseman jostled with the ball five yards out while a defender fell across his path, and then stabbed the ball through between post and 'keeper Huttley.

Nevertheless the Dagenham attack, a makeshift line for the night with Tony Bass on their right wing, drew John Pratt out for several brave advances to pre-block any likely shots.

Indeed Bass, often prominent in conjunction with centre forward Roy Drake, proved extra troublesome at times.

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Dagenham 1

In Wycombe's defence, while young Keith Stevenson held up his side of things, the more experienced Lou Temel covered superbly, and the Wanderers' forward line could feel confident of support.

The margin increased after 27 minutes, as Busby and Barry Baker worked upfield together. An inside cross from the former to his inside right led to a neat chip pass over Dagenham's defence, for Busby to drive waist high past Huttley.

Some useful running on the right wing from Busby must have hinted strongly to Lee that here could be a potential wealth of goals. Les Merrick, offered a chance to reclaim his first team spot, made no such impression, hardly compensating the absence of Worley, and

especially the string of right wing crosses which is his trademark.

Late in the period, and again soon after the break, Bass missed connection with a loose ball running temptingly across the Wycombe line but, amid some increasing strong arm play by the Daggers, Wanderers began to make the running at last.

They looked for so long to be on the verge of building up a formidable first leg advantage. Yet no more goals came, and Dagenham even grabbed one back in the 76th minute.

A Drake cross from the left found Bass ready to ram Dagenham right back into the reckoning for the return clash.